ENDORSED San Francisco County Superior Court 1 Philip T. Emmons (SBN 124902) Law Office of Philip T. Emmons 1990 N. California Blvd., 8th Floor NOV & 8 2011 2 Walnut Creek, CA 94596 CLEAK OF THE CO 3 T: (925) 287-6436 4 Attorney for Plaintiff **Environmental Research Center** 5 6 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA 7 COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO CGC-11-516015 8 ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH Case No. CENTER, a California non-profit 9 corporation, **COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE** 1.0 **RELIEF AND CIVIL PENALTIES** Plaintiff, 11 [Health & Safety Code §25249.5, et seq.] 12 13 ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC.; PLATINUM HEALTH PRODUCTS: 14 PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS: PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, INC.; PURE 15 PLANET PRODUCTS; PURE PLANET 16 OASIS, LLC.; and DOES 1-50, inclusive, 17 Defendants. 18 19 Plaintiff Environmental Research Center brings this action in the interests of the general 20 public and, on information and belief, hereby alleges: 21 INTRODUCTION 22 This action seeks to remedy Defendants' continuing failure to warn consumers in 1. 23 California that they are being exposed to lead, a substance known to the State of California to 24 cause cancer, birth defects and other reproductive harm. 25 2. Defendants have manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or have 26 otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continue to manufacture, package, 27 distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continue to be involved in the chain of commerce of the 28 All statutory and regulatory references herein are to California law, unless otherwise specified.

manufacturing, packaging, distributing, marketing and/or selling of THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California without first providing clear and reasonable warnings, within the meaning of Proposition 65, regarding the risks of cancer, birth defects and other reproductive harm posed by exposure to lead through the use and/or handling of THE PRODUCTS. Plaintiff seeks an injunctive order compelling Defendants to bring their business practices into compliance with Proposition 65 by providing clear and reasonable warnings to each individual who may be exposed to lead from the use and/or handling of THE PRODUCTS.

6. In addition to injunctive relief, Plaintiff seeks an assessment of civil penalties to remedy Defendants' failure to provide clear and reasonable warnings regarding exposures to the lead.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 7. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to California Constitution
 Article VI, Section 10, which grants the Superior Court "original jurisdiction in all causes except
 those given by statute to other trial courts." The statute under which this action is brought does
 not specify any other basis for jurisdiction.
- 8. This Court has jurisdiction over Defendants because, based on information and belief, Defendants are businesses having sufficient minimum contacts with California, or otherwise intentionally availing themselves of the California market through the marketing, distribution and/or sale of THE PRODUCTS in the State of California to render the exercise of jurisdiction over them by the California courts consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.
- 9. This Court is the proper venue for this action because the Defendants have violated California law in the County of San Francisco. Furthermore, this Court is the proper venue under Code of Civil Procedure §395.5 and H&S Code §25249.7(a), which provides that any person who violates or threatens to violate H&S Code §\$25249.5 or 25249.6 may be enjoined in any court of competent jurisdiction.

PARTIES

10. Plaintiff Environmental Research Center ("ERC") is a non-profit corporation organized under California's Non-Profit Benefit Corporation Law. ERC is dedicated to, among

other causes, reducing the use and misuse of hazardous and toxic substances, consumer protection, worker safety and corporate responsibility.

- 11. ERC is a person within the meaning of H&S Code §25118 and brings this enforcement action in the public interest pursuant to H&S Code §25249.7(d).
- 12. Defendant ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC. is a corporation and a person within the meaning of H&S Code §25249.11(a). Defendant ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC. has manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or has otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continues to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continues to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California.
- 13. Defendant PLATINUM HEALTH PRODUCTS is a company of unknown form and a person within the meaning of H&S Code §25249.11(a). Defendant PLATINUM HEALTH PRODUCTS has manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or has otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continues to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continues to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California.
- 14. Defendant PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS is a company of unknown form and a person within the meaning of H&S Code §25249.11(a). Defendant PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS has manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or has otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continues to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continues to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California.
- 15. Defendant PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, INC. is a corporation and a person within the meaning of H&S Code §25249.11(a). Defendant PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, INC. has manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or has otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continues to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continues to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California.
- 16. Defendant PURE PLANET PRODUCTS is a company of unknown form and a person within the meaning of H&S Code §25249.11(a). Defendant PURE PLANET

PRODUCTS has manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or has otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continues to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continues to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California.

- 17. Defendant PURE PLANET OASIS, LLC. is a limited liability company of and a person within the meaning of H&S Code §25249.11(a). Defendant PURE PLANET OASIS, LLC. has manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or has otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continues to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continues to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California.
- 18. Defendants Does 1-50 are named herein under fictitious names, as their true names and capacities are unknown to Plaintiff. ERC is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that each of said Does has manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or has otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continues to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continues to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California, and/or is responsible, in some actionable manner, for the events and happenings referred to herein, either through its conduct or through the conduct of its agents, servants or employees, or in some other manner, causing the harms alleged herein. Plaintiff will seek leave to amend this Complaint to set forth the true names and capacities of Does when ascertained.

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 19. The People of the State of California have declared in Proposition 65 their right "[t]o be informed about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm." (Section 1(b) of Initiative Measure, Proposition 65).
- 20. To effect this goal, Proposition 65 requires that individuals be provided with a "clear and reasonable warning" before being exposed to substances listed by the State of California as causing cancer or reproductive toxicity. H&S Code §25249.6 states, in pertinent part:

No person in the course of doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer or

 21. Proposition 65 provides that any person who "violates or threatens to violate" the statute "may be enjoined in any court of competent jurisdiction." (H&S Code §25249.7(a).) "Threaten to violate" is defined to mean creating "a condition in which there is a substantial probability that a violation will occur." (H&S Code §25249.11(e).) Violators are liable for civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per day for each violation of Proposition 65. (H&S Code §25249.7(b).)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

- 22. On February 27, 1987, the State of California officially listed the chemical lead as a chemical known to cause developmental and reproductive toxicity. Lead became subject to the warning requirement one year later and was therefore subject to the "clear and reasonable" warning requirements of Proposition 65 beginning on February 27, 1988. (27 California Code of Regulations ("CCR") §25000, et seq.; H&S Code §25249.5, et seq.)
- 23. On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed the chemical lead as a chemical known to cause cancer. Lead became subject to the warning requirement one year later and was therefore subject to the "clear and reasonable" warning requirements of Proposition 65 beginning on October 1, 1993. (27 CCR §25000, et seq.; H&S Code §25249.5, et seq.)
- 24. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based on such information and belief, alleges THE PRODUCTS have been marketed, distributed and/or sold to individuals in California without the requisite clear and reasonable warnings before, on, and after December 23, 2010. THE PRODUCTS continue to be marketed, distributed and sold in California without the requisite warning information.
- 25. As a proximate result of acts by Defendants, as persons in the course of doing business within the meaning of H&S Code §25249.11(b), individuals throughout the State of California, including in the County of San Francisco, have been exposed to lead without clear and reasonable warnings. The individuals subject to exposures to lead include normal and foreseeable users of THE PRODUCTS, as well as all other persons exposed to THE PRODUCTS.
- 26. At all times relevant to this action, Defendants have knowingly and intentionally exposed the users and/or handlers of THE PRODUCTS to lead without first giving clear and

 reasonable warnings to such individuals.

- 27. Individuals using or handling THE PRODUCTS are exposed to lead in excess of the "maximum allowable daily" and "no significant risk" levels determined by the State of California, as applicable.
- 28. At all times relevant to this action, Defendants have, in the course of doing business, failed to provide individuals using and/or handling THE PRODUCTS with clear and reasonable warnings that THE PRODUCTS exposes individuals to lead.
- 29. THE PRODUCTS continue to be marketed, distributed, and/or sold in California without the requisite clear and reasonable warnings.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(Injunctive Relief for Violations of Health and Safety Code §25249.5, et seq. concerning THE PRODUCTS, which are identified in Plaintiff's December 23, 2010 60-Day Notice of Violations)

- 30. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference Paragraphs 1 through 29, inclusive, as if specifically set forth herein.
- 31. On December 23, 2010, Plaintiff sent a 60-Day Notice of Proposition 65 violations to the requisite public enforcement agencies and to Defendants ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC., PLATINUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, INC., PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, and PURE PLANET OASIS, LLC. ("Notice of Violations"). THE PRODUCTS were identified in the Notice of Violations as containing lead exceeding allowable levels. The Notice of Violations was issued pursuant to, and in compliance with, the requirements of H&S Code §25249.7(d) and the statute's implementing regulations regarding the notice of violations to be given to certain public enforcement agencies and to the violator. The Notice of Violations was issued as follows:
 - a. Defendants ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC., PLATINUM HEALTH
 PRODUCTS, PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURE PLANET
 PRODUCTS, INC., PURE PLANET PRODUCTS and PURE PLANET
 OASIS, LLC., and the California Attorney General were provided copies
 by Certified Mail of the Notice of Violations, along with a Certificate of
 Merit by the attorney for the noticing party stating that there is a
 reasonable and meritorious cause for this action. The requisite county

- district attorneys and city attorneys were provided copies by First Class Mail of the Notice of Violations and Certificate of Merit.
- b. Defendants ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC., PLATINUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, INC., PURE PLANET PRODUCTS and PURE PLANET OASIS, LLC. were provided, with the Notice of Violations, a copy of a document entitled "The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65): A Summary," which is also known as Appendix A to Title 27 of CCR §25903.
- c. The California Attorney General was provided, with the Notice of Violations, additional factual information sufficient to establish a basis for the certificate, including the identity of the persons consulted with and relied on by the certifier, and the facts, studies, or other data reviewed by those persons, pursuant to H&S Code §\$25249.7(d)(1) and 25249.7(h)(2).
- 32. The appropriate public enforcement agencies have failed to commence and diligently prosecute a cause of action under H&S Code §25249.5, et seq. against Defendants based on the allegations herein.
- 33. By committing the acts alleged in this Complaint, Defendants at all times relevant to this action, and continuing through the present, have violated and continue to violate H&S Code §25249.6 by, in the course of doing business, knowingly and intentionally exposing individuals who use or handle THE PRODUCTS to the chemical lead at levels exceeding allowable exposure levels without Defendants first giving clear and reasonable warnings to such individuals pursuant to H&S Code §\$25249.6 and 25249.11(f). Defendants have manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or have otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continue to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continue to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS, which have been, are, and will be used and/or handled by individuals in California, without Defendants providing clear and reasonable warnings, within the meaning of Proposition 65, regarding the risks of cancer, birth defects and other reproductive harm posed by exposure to lead through the use and/or handling of THE PRODUCTS. Furthermore, Defendants have threatened to violate H&S Code

§25249.6 by THE PRODUCTS being marketed, offered for sale, sold and/or otherwise provided for use and/or handling to individuals in California.

- 34. By the above-described acts, Defendants have violated H&S Code §25249.6 and are therefore subject to an injunction ordering Defendants to stop violating Proposition 65, and to provide required warnings to consumers and other individuals who will purchase, use and/or handle THE PRODUCTS.
- 35. An action for injunctive relief under Proposition 65 is specifically authorized by Health & Safety Code §25249.7(a).
- 36. Continuing commission by Defendants of the acts alleged above will irreparably harm the citizens of the State of California, for which harm they have no plain, speedy, or adequate remedy at law.

Wherefore, plaintiff prays judgment against Defendants, as set forth hereafter.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

(Civil Penalties for Violations of Health and Safety Code §25249.5, et seq. concerning THE PRODUCTS, which are identified in Plaintiff's December 23, 2010 60-Day Notice of Violations)

- 37. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference Paragraphs 1 through 36, inclusive, as if specifically set forth herein.
- 38. On December 23, 2010, Plaintiff sent a 60-Day Notice of Proposition 65 violations to the requisite public enforcement agencies and to Defendants ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC., PLATINUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, INC., PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, and PURE PLANET OASIS, LLC. ("Notice of Violations"). THE PRODUCTS were identified in the Notice of Violations as containing lead exceeding allowable levels. The Notice of Violations was issued pursuant to, and in compliance with, the requirements of H&S Code §25249.7(d) and the statute's implementing regulations regarding the notice of violations to be given to certain public enforcement agencies and to the violator. The Notice of Violations was issued as follows:
 - a. Defendants ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC., PLATINUM HEALTH
 PRODUCTS, PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURE PLANET
 PRODUCTS, INC., PURE PLANET PRODUCTS and PURE PLANET
 OASIS, LLC., and the California Attorney General were provided copies

by Certified Mail of the Notice of Violations, along with a Certificate of Merit by the attorney for the noticing party stating that there is a reasonable and meritorious cause for this action. The requisite county district attorneys and city attorneys were provided copies by First Class Mail of the Notice of Violations and Certificate of Merit.

- b. Defendants ORGANIC BY NATURE, INC., PLATINUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURIUM HEALTH PRODUCTS, PURE PLANET PRODUCTS, INC., PURE PLANET PRODUCTS and PURE PLANET OASIS, LLC. were provided, with the Notice of Violations, a copy of a document entitled "The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65): A Summary," which is also known as Appendix A to Title 27 of CCR §25903.
- c. The California Attorney General was provided, with the Notice of Violations, additional factual information sufficient to establish a basis for the certificate, including the identity of the persons consulted with and relied on by the certifier, and the facts, studies, or other data reviewed by those persons, pursuant to H&S Code §\$25249.7(d)(1) and 25249.7(h)(2).
- 39. The appropriate public enforcement agencies have failed to commence and diligently prosecute a cause of action under H&S Code §2524935, et seq. against Defendants based on the allegations herein.
- 40. By committing the acts alleged in this Complaint, Defendants at all times relevant to this action, and continuing through the present, have violated and continue to violate H&S Code §25249.6 by, in the course of doing business, knowingly and intentionally exposing individuals who use or handle THE PRODUCTS to the chemical lead at levels exceeding allowable exposure levels without Defendants first giving clear and reasonable warnings to such individuals pursuant to H&S Code §\$25249.6 and 25249.11(f). Defendants have manufactured, packaged, distributed, marketed, sold and/or have otherwise been involved in the chain of commerce of, and continue to manufacture, package, distribute, market, sell, and/or otherwise continue to be involved in the chain of commerce of THE PRODUCTS, which have been, are, and will be used and/or handled by individuals in California, without Defendants providing clear

and reasonable warnings, within the meaning of Proposition 65, regarding the risks of cancer, birth defects and other reproductive harm posed by exposure to lead through the use and/or handling of THE PRODUCTS. Furthermore, Defendants have threatened to violate H&S Code §25249.6 by THE PRODUCTS being marketed, offered for sale, sold and/or otherwise provided for use and/or handling to individuals in California.

41. By the above-described acts, Defendants are liable, pursuant to H&S Code \$25249.7(b), for a civil penalty of \$2,500 per day for each violation of H&S Code \$25249.6 relating to THE PRODUCTS.

Wherefore, plaintiff prays judgment against Defendants, as set forth hereafter.

THE NEED FOR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

- 42. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by this reference Paragraphs 1 through 41, as if set forth below.
- 43. By committing the acts alleged in this Complaint, Defendants have caused irreparable harm for which there is no plain, speedy or adequate remedy at law. In the absence of equitable relief, Defendants will continue to create a substantial risk of irreparable injury by continuing to cause consumers to be involuntarily and unwittingly exposed to lead through the use and/or handling of THE PRODUCTS.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, Plaintiff prays for the following relief:

- A. A preliminary and permanent injunction enjoining Defendants, their agents, employees, assigns and all persons acting in concert or participating with Defendants, from manufacturing, packaging, distributing, marketing and/or selling THE PRODUCTS for sale or use in California without first providing clear and reasonable warnings, within the meaning of Proposition 65, that the users and/or handlers of THE PRODUCTS are exposed to the lead.
- B. An assessment of civil penalties pursuant to Health & Safety Code §25249.7(b), against Defendants in the amount of \$2,500 per day for each violation of Proposition 65;
- C. An award to Plaintiff of its reasonable attorney fees pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure §1021.5 or the substantial benefit theory;
 - D. An award of costs of suit herein; and

1	E. Such other and further re	lief as may be just and proper.
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3	Dated: November 18, 2011	LAW OFFICE OF PHILIP T. EMMONS
4 5		By: Philip T. Expans
6		Philip T. Emmons Attorney for Plaintiff Environmental Research Center
7		Environmental Research Center
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